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— Anthony Ambrogio, Music & Art Department, Sachem Central Schools

WebEx WebOffice solves tracking and communications challenges for Sachem Central School District



INDUSTRY

Education

SUMMARY

Sachem Central Schools is the largest suburban school district in New York State. In the Music & Art Department alone, there are 85 teachers located in 18 different buildings. Keeping such a dispersed group of faculty in close communication can be a challenge, but administrator Anthony Ambrogio has WebEx WebOffice to help him succeed.

ABOUT SACHEM CENTRAL SCHOOLS

Line of Business

Music & Art Department
 in Suburban School District

Headquarters

Holbrook, NY

Number of Employees

85 in Music & Art Department

WebEx WebOffice User since Summer 2003

Customer Business Profile

Sachem is the largest suburban school district in the state of New York, with over 15,000 students attending annually. In the Music & Art Department alone, there are 85 teachers located in 18 different buildings.

The Situation

When Anthony Ambrogio joined the Music & Art Department in 2003, one of the first things he did was investigate setting up a Web-based solution for collaboration among staff. While the school preferred trying to build something in-house, Anthony expressed his concerns about relying on a busy IT staff with limited resources.

The Solution

Long before he accepted his position in the Sachem School District, Ambrogio had been an avid user of WebEx WebOffice so he persuaded school officials to try the solution for the busy Music & Art Department.

Ambrogio set up WebEx WebOffice in the summer of 2003 as a way for faculty in 18 different physical locations to easily exchange ideas and information.

The Benefits

WebEx WebOffice has solved a number of tracking and communications challenges for Sachem Central School District’s Music & Art Department.

The WebEx WebOffice Database Manager is proving to be a huge time saver for the busy group. They’ve been able to move their event registration online. “We have over 700 students participating in our upcoming music festival. Before WebOffice, we would have spent hours collecting printed forms from teachers and then entering the information on the computer. Now, teachers can register their students online, right from the classroom,” says Ambrogio.

The WebOffice Database Manager also tracks the whereabouts of the department’s 5,000 instruments. “Now rather than making a lot of phone calls to the different buildings to find an extra flute, we just look in the database,” Ambrogio says.

Teachers have embraced the technology. They use the WebOffice Discussion Forums for topics on everything from music software programs to the use of gel pens in art classes.

Recently teachers collaborated on WebEx WebOffice to create a 2-hour faculty concert and art exhibit. Ambrogio even posted MP3s of the music performances on WebOffice so that students and teachers could listen online.

Ambrogio and other Sachem staff rely heavily on the WebOffice Online Calendar. It makes coordinating meetings with the entire group easy. “On a typical day, I

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might have four concerts, in addition to several private meetings. I just sync the WebOffice Calendar with my Palm, and I have my schedule with me even when I'm on the road,” says Ambrogio.

And when Ambrogio needs to get an email out to the staff quickly or post an announcement, he can log on to WebOffice from any computer, anywhere.

Ambrogio's assistants estimate that WebEx WebOffice has improved their productivity by about 30%. With the WebOffice Document Manager, they no longer need to maintain printed handbooks with forms and schedules of activities.

“The old 2-inch thick booklets given out at the start of each semester are a thing of the past. At our most recent semester kick-off, I think we handed out only five pieces of paper. Everything is on our WebOffice now!”

Students in Sachem can visit the WebOffice as guests, with limited access. The teachers maintain an area on the site with organized links for all areas of music and art advocacy. Students can learn about upcoming local cultural events, link to online ticket brokers, find resources and help on art software programs, research scholarships and more.

There are plans to expand WebOffice by creating a cumulative knowledge base, along with a searchable digitized music library.

Ambrogio has helped to change the Sachem environment from a top-down organization to a more collaborative group of professionals. He's been invited to present his work at the New York State Administrators Convention. “I'm excited to share my experience and possibly help other schools achieve what we have here at Sachem,” Ambrogio says.

HIGHLIGHTS

- WebEx WebOffice has improved productivity for the Music & Art Department staff by about 30%. With the Document Manager, there's no need to maintain printed handbooks with forms and schedules of activities.
- The WebOffice Database Manager keeps track of over 5,000 instruments within the school system.
- The WebEx WebOffice Database Manager saves time by allowing the Music & Art Department to move event registration online.
- Students can visit the Music & Art Department's WebOffice as guests, with access to links for all areas of music and art advocacy. They can learn about upcoming cultural events, link to online ticket brokers, find resources and help on art software programs, research scholarships and more.
- The WebOffice Online Calendar makes coordinating faculty meetings easier.

